

Rigved & Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization: Inking the Link

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Personal Introduction: I am VR Patil, presently living in Pune city of Maharashtra state of India. I am neither Historian nor archaeologist but an engineer by qualification & profession who has interest in History & Culture of my country, India. Since last four years, I have been taking keen interest in knowing more about the past history of India. As I am not a Sanskrit scholar, I do not want to pretend that I have studied original available Sanskrit texts on Rigved but hereby admit that have tried to understand a few selected but translated versions available in English, Hindi & Marathi. Based on the literature I have gone through & referred to on the Internet, I have framed my views about the subject “ **Rigved & Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization: Inking the Link**”. In this connection, I wish to state that I do not want to praise or criticise anyone & hence I purposely do not want to quote the names of the researchers who have done contributions on the said subject.

Additionally, I do not want to claim that I have done basic research on the subject but beg to submit that I tried to find answers to the questions those came up in mind while reading different texts/papers etc. One such question is, *What could it mean?* & another one, *What could have happened during that period?* Based on available literature, using simple logic, & common sense where ever possible, I am expressing my views that could be different from others. My selection of Timeframe for Indus Valley Civilization is mainly based on the historical & archaeological literature.

Rigved & Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization: Inking the Link

Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization (I-SVC) :

The Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilisation is also known as the **Harappan Civilisation**, after Harappa, the first of its sites where excavation was done. I-SVC period is generally divided into three parts i.e. Early Harappan (3300 to 2600 BCE), Mature Harappan (2600 to 1900 BCE) & Late Harappan (1900 to 1700 BCE). It is generally agreed & accepted that I-SVC belongs to **Bronze Age period**.

Some of the characteristic features of I-SVC are, a) planned cities /town having advanced urban culture with special emphasis on wide roads for free & ease of movements, proper sanitation (sewerage and drainage) for better hygiene, b) presence of dockyards, granaries, great baths, warehouses, brick platforms, and protective walls around cities indicating perfectness of the town planning, c) evidence of well developed material culture exhibited by presence of pottery, exquisite jewellery pieces, bricks, seals, measures etc. & use of metals like copper, tin, lead, gold & silver., d) development of measuring tools for length, mass, and time etc., e) use of wheeled transport such as bullock-carts & boats for sea transport.

Aryan Invasion/Migration (AIT/AMT) Theory supporters forcefully tell that Aryans had migrated to Indus Valley region after the decline of Indus Valley Civilization. Hence it was the outsiders i. e. Sanskrit speaking migrated Aryans who composed the Rigved in the Indus Valley region around 1500 to 1200 Before Common/Current Era(BCE).

Out of India Theory (OIT) proposers say that the earliest form of Rigved was composed well before Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization was developed i. e. around 5000 to 4000 BCE. Both Sanskrit & Rigved have Indian origin. Around 2500 BCE, the people from Indus Valley would have migrated from I-SVC to North-west & Other places & hence there are many words similar to Sanskrit in many Europeans & Iranian languages.

Explanation on some Rigvedic Terms:

The Rigved is an ancient Indian sacred collection of Vedic Sanskrit hymns. It was recited in a group and heard by many. It is considered to be one of the oldest documented literatures available in the world & has been seriously studied by many scholars of the different regions of the world. But the meanings / interpretations of many terms found in Rig-Veda differ from person to person. Possible meanings of some selected but commonly found words or terms in Rigved in present perspective are given below;

Deities/Gods : Some of the Rigvedic deities are the natural forces those were either physically seen or experienced during day to day life by the rigvedic people. Deities can be classified as Cosmic, atmospheric or land based and these deities include Agni, Usha, Mitra Varuna, Marut, Vayu, Surya, Earth, Soma etc. But some of them appear to be mythical or imaginary that are created with some specific purpose e.g. Indra, Nasatya/Ashvins, Bruhaspti, Savitr etc.

Asura: Asuras /Demons are those forces /factors who create or cause difficulties/hardship/ disturbances/ destruction/ unfavourable or adverse conditions for relatively longer duration & pose threat to the lives of people while carrying out regular activities in day to day life. Many asuras mentioned in Rigved appear to be imaginary characters.

Indra: Indra is the key deity mentioned in Rigved who lives in Heaven. It is said that more than 250 hymns are dedicated to Indra alone. **Concept of Indra probably has its origin in Mind & Body relationship existing in human-beings.** As we know that our body has many organs(Indriyas), but out of these, only the external organs can be seen by anyone, and the internal organs remain invisible. It is our **mind**, which physically does not exist & hence cannot be seen but controls our body. Based on this analogy, we can say that the **Supreme God, Indra** was created as **The Chief Controller** for all gods (indriyas of Nature) by the **wiser men** of that era so as to bring all natural forces or powers under one control (principle of Unity of Command). It was believed that for all practical purpose, Indra remains invisible/behind screen (similar to mind) in the sky but upon request, acts accordingly to fulfil the wishes of his devotees. Indra, probably meant Master of all organs((Indriyas) of the nature.

Agni/Fire: It is well known that since more than 60,000 years man has been using the fire. Fire generates heat that was useful in cold winter and also provides light that was helpful in the night for improved visibility. Additionally, it was used for cooking food, as a weapon to keep away wild animals & to attack enemies. Hence Agni/ fire were respected by the Rigvedic community as the God who can be useful as a protector or destroyer. Since Agni/fire, the first key natural force that was brought under control by the human-beings, it had special place in rigvedic community. That is why, more than 200 hymns are dedicated to Agni in Rigved. Agni plays very important role in Yajnas. It is assumed to act as a messenger between cosmic/ atmospheric deities & human-beings. Also it serves as a mouth to accept various sacrifices that are offered during Yajnas & also converts sacrifices into vapour state/fumes so that they would reach to unseen cosmic & atmospheric gods. Cavemen from ancient age on several occasion, would have seen in the forests that when the strong wind blows, causing dry branches of trees to rub one over the other, resulting in creation of fire. Hence rigvedic people would have believed that God Agni resides in the plants/trees. That is why in Rigved, trees are considered divine but infinite source of energy.

Mitra & Varuna: In old Rigvedic text , Mitra & Varuna considered as *Dvandva* or dual and in which Mitra-Varuna but it appears that pair has essentially the similar characteristics as Varuna alone. Mitra is considered as Friend and associated with light of dawn, and Varuna as god of land water. But both Mitra and Varuna are defined as Asuras sometime & Devas other time.

But in my view, **Mitra** could be the **heating effect** generated during the day time when the Sun arrives in the sky and **Varuna** could be the God of land water as his mount is Makara (Crocodile, but found in legends only). Especially during cold season (harsh winter), heat provided by the Rising Sun would be giving a great relief to all & hence probably called as Mitra; a friend of all. As Indra was considered as the god who orders the rain, Varuna was given the responsibility of managing all water resources available on the Earth such as Seas, rivers, natural ponds/lakes and also stagnated water caused due to heavy rains. As one cannot live without water, therefore, Varuna was defined as God.

As we experience in the peak summer season, when the temperature reaches 40 degree Celsius, it becomes increasingly difficult to move around to carry out routine duties. Many cities experience **intense heat wave**, (effect of **Mitra**) & when temperatures crosses 45 degree Celsius, towns/Cities wear deserted look. When it rains heavily causing flooding of rivers, towns, fields etc resulting in hardship for the people living in that area. From these angles, in the beginning, both Mitra & Varuna could have been classified as Asuras. This is because, excessive heat during summer & heavy flooding/ water logging during rainy season also cause destruction of living things (Plants, animal & human-beings also).

In India, summer season is followed by rainy season, rigvedic people would have seen them together (a natural phenomenon) & called them as Dvandva. Earlier, complete day-night period was divided in different segments/parts, such as Dawn(Usha), Rising of the Sun (morning), Movement of the Sun during a daytime, Distribution of light & heat, Sunset (evening), Dusk & Night (Ratri) etc. Similarly, in case of Rain also possible division of various activities were, Arrival of rain clouds in the Sky, Formation of Thunderstorm (order By Indra to the clouds to give rain), Actual rainfall (Parjanya), spread of rain water & flooding of Rivers/fields due to heavy rains etc. In other words, every major activity was subdivided into many sub activities and an independent Deity/ character was assigned a specific job & made responsible for each sub activity. In modern terms, this can be called as division or allocation of work. As the knowledge grew & understanding improved, after a few generations, the people would have started looking at this phenomenon in **totality**, & then **Mitra- Varuna** could have been redefined as Devas. Today, in India, the Sun is also called as Mitra & Varuna is considered as the rain god. It appears that there was Love & hate relationship between Rigvedic people & Mitra-Varuna duo..

Nasatya/Asvins/ Ashvins:

In my opinion, intellectual persons of rigvedic period might have thought that the earth is stationary & the Sun moves around it in a special vehicle/cart. This idea, might have come from a cart being pulled by two bulls. They might have realized that to move anything from one place to other, requires some external force. Hence they created twin deities called **Nasatya & Dasra** who take The Sun God in a vehicle or cart (driven by powerful forces), brings it to the horizon , completes a day trip & again in the evening takes it back to original place. Arrival of the Sun causes day & its departure causes night. **Nasatya** probably means, he is very much there but not being seen due to severe light/ aura of the Sun. **Nasatya & Dasra** are considered as the lords of movement , leader of journey, voyage.

Nasatya & Dasra are also called as **Ashivns/Asvins** who are also considered as divine powerful twins deities(horsemen?). They symbolise the shining of sunrise and sunset. In my view, Ashvins mean the twins who possess unlimited energy, move swiftly like wind & can overcome any hurdle easily. Daily, they cover the whole world (in day & night) through their authoritative & untired movements /journey.

Yajna: Ideally, **Yajna** is a practice of worship devised by Rigvedic people. The Yajna was a huge open-air religious ceremony of the Rigvedic Aryans. The origin of Yajna could be traced to **Wild land Fire or Forest fire** that occurs in nature. Brainy people of early rigvedic era would have

watched wild fire several times. As we know, wild fire causes destruction of living things including vegetation/ plants, birds, animals & human-beings also. Rigvedic people would have thought when God Indra becomes angry due to some reasons, he directs Agni /fire to initiate action against the living things & to kill them as a punishment. **(It is said that ancient man, after seeing a wooden log rolling down from a hill top to foot hill got an idea of inventing a wheel. Man first made a solid wooden wheel from a log & then modified it to a spoked wheel. Similarly, after noticing floating of a broken branch of a tree on river water, first man got an idea to make a raft by tying many branches as a mode of water transport to cross the river & then invented the wooden boat. By extensively using Observation & Experiment techniques, Man has invented/discovered many things in the past & recent time also).** Some early rigvedic people would have given serious thought over this & tried to replicate this phenomenon on a small scale so as to please/pacify God **Indra** & other gods. This proactive approach might have finally led in shaping Yajna as the earliest sacrificial ritual.

If we take a close look at Yajna formulation, it involved first taking a clue from nature, discussion about the replication it on a small scale among the likeminded people, composition of the hymns for worshipping the Gods, conducting actual experiment as per decided procedure, convincing the other people, spreading awareness to other places & establishing it as a regular practice would certainly have taken a very long time. This can only happen in the society that has stability, peaceful living & maturity. That is why, I place **Yajna** activity as a part of **Mature Harappan Period (2200 to 2000 BCE)**. **As a lot of thinking had gone in formulating Yajna**, definitely, it is not the design of any ancient barbaric nomadic tribe which kept moving from place to place. If we consider the first settlement in Indus Valley to have occurred around 3300 BCE, then around 1000 years would have already been elapsed before introduction of Yajna.

Since beginning, Yajna or Vedic fire sacrifice ritual would have been conducted by the people of ascetic nature (seer poets/rishis/sages) who were designated as Priests or Brahmins later on. During one of the Yajnas, a seer/rishi named **Dadhichi** would have jumped into Yajnakund/fire altar so as to attract attention of the common people, & thereafter, priestly people would have started telling the story that **Dadhichi Rishi** has given his bones to make **Vajra / Thunderbolt** weapon for God Indra. Yajnas would most likely be conducted in Open plain areas outside town, on the banks of river or dried river beds where would be easy to invite & please cosmic, atmospheric & land based gods..

Soma, the sacred drink, would be given to all those involved in Yajna ceremony. Purpose may be due to intoxication effect, the people performing and close watchers would concentrate on Yajna & not to show any sympathy or emotions towards animals/birds being sacrificed so as to maintain **Purity** of the things being sacrificed (probably no disturbance of any form was acceptable during the rite). **Soma** was subsequently used as sacrificial item in Yajna. Also with **Soma juice**, it was possible to conduct Yajna on any open place within town itself. It is assumed that after drinking **Soma juice**, God **Indra** gets energized & become very powerful.

Dasas & Dasyus: Among the scholars, there are different opinions about these two terms that are found in Rigved. Some say that **Dasas** were a collection of tribes who had no interest in rituals of rigvedic people & therefore they kept safe distance from Yajnas. It is believed that they lived in colonies, referred to as 'Pura'. Others believe that Dasa is a generic name of a tribe that was subdued by Rigvedic Aryans. They were treated as the servants & hence were in contacts with the Priests.

It is said that, the **Dasyus** were the group of people who had different religious beliefs than Rigvedic Priests. Therefore, they were not interested in keeping contacts with the Rigvedic Priests. Some say that Dasyus were heads of their society, they might be considering

themselves superior to Priests & not interested getting dictated by others & hence were very hostile towards rigvedic community. There are Rigvedic hymns that describe Indra as Dasyus-slayer which appears to be imaginary (similar to proverb “if the wishes were the horses”). This makes it very clear that there was no possibility of any compromise or convergence of these two communities.

Some researchers claim that the terms, Dasa, Dasyus & Asuras are interchangeable. It is said that in Rigved, there are some incidences of direct fight between Priests & Dasas but no such incidence of direct conflict between Dasyus & Priests has been mentioned. Probably, it shows that the priest were very well aware that taming the Dasyus was beyond their capabilities & therefore they just prayed to God Indra & Agni to do the needful.

The above comments/views expressed by various researchers are based on the considerations that Dasas & Dasyus are human-beings. In my opinion that both Dasas & Dasyus were not human-beings but they belong to different categories of animal kingdom that has been explained in detail as below,

To understand the intricacy of Rigvedic Yajna, we need to go back to 2000 BCE period & by creating a scene of Yajna ceremony of Rigved in front of our eyes, we need to reconstruct the past. During rigvedic time, temporary Yajna-kunds/fire altars were mostly built in an open air either on dried river bed/ bank of a river or plain ground/field, where various animals/food items were sacrificed. To sacrifice any animal (birds, goat, sheep, and cattle), it first required to be killed & probably this was done by slitting a throat using a sharp bronze blade. Then the body of the sacrificial animal would be cut into small pieces so as to offer as oblation to Fire/Agni by many Priests. Some parts of an animal which had less muscle flesh such as head, leg, tail & carcass would be kept separately. When fire would be lit, then one by one, meat pieces would be offered to Agni while reciting hymns..It would create fumes or smoke that would attract the wild animals living nearby areas & the birds from the sky who in my view, are mentioned as Dasas & Dasyus respectively in Rigved. Dictionary meaning of the word **Dasa** is a **servant** or **slave**. A servant obeys orders & remains faithful to his Master. The most eligible animal which qualifies as **Servant** is a Dog. Dog was the first animal domesticated by man almost 12000 years ago. Since then, it has been serving mankind in many ways. In ancient time also, many cattle herders or shepherds used to keep the dogs so as to mark the movements of the herds & also keep watch on other attacking animals. In one of the hymns, there is a reference that Indra suggesting Yadu to use Dasa. Some other hymn indicates that a three headed Dasa having six eyes was shouting, then it was killed by Indra. Hence first impression is that **Dasas** means the **Dogs** but actually they could be wild animals having appearance like domestic dogs such as **Wild Dogs(Dholes) or Hyenas or Common Jackals or Grey wolves or Foxes**. The word **Pura** probably means a location where a **Group of animals lives**. Some Rigvedic hymns also indicate that **Dasas** have dark skin, dwell & move in the darkness. Being nocturnal animal (means moves in night), **Hyena** fits into this description. In true sense, meaning of the hymn could be, in the night, three **Hyenas** in a group were shouting & spoiling purity of the site of Yajna. Hyena preferred to live in a small group & hides in a cave like natural shelter or dens or burrows, probably defined as **Pura** in a Hymn. Those **Hyenas** were only interested in eating remains of the animals or left over pieces of meat (Hyenas can crush & digest the bones of dead one also). It is quite possible some domestic dogs would be present with the Priests who would be quarrelling with the foreign animals; **Hyenas**. Various names of Dasas given in Rigved such as **Cumuri, Dhuni, Sambara, Pipru, and Susna** probably indicate, Priests would have encountered different groups of animals which resemble like domestic Dogs i.e. Dasas at different sites of Yajnas (in one of the hymns it is mentioned that a **Dasa** uses “**women as weapons**” indicative of presence of a female dasa that would have been identified by presence of the breasts which is impossible in case of ancient human societies but definite possibility with dogs/ Hyenas). Like Dogs, Hyenas too do growl i.e. make a low, guttural rough sound, and usually in anger.

Dasyus are described as rite less, Anasa(noseless), krishnatvac(dark skin), Amanush(do not

follow human laws). Bird like **Vulture** or **Crow** would fit into this description but crow does not cause much problem as Vulture does(also Crow plays a key role during **Shraddh** ceremony). Please note that a bird does not have sharp nose(well defined nostrils) like man but has two holes near its upper beak base to inhale the air (see picture of any Pakistan/Indian Vulture). Hence practical meaning of the term **Anasa** as noseless or flat-nose is very appropriate. Indian Vulture is grey to black in colour(dark skin wings) & does not belongs to the category of man (a bird & not even mammal); **Amanush** & hence it does not follow the rites of human-beings (eats raw or uncooked meat of dead animals).

Both **Hyenas** & **Vultures** have strong sense of smell, sharp eyesight & roasting of flesh in a Yajna would be creating a typical smell that would send signal to these animals/birds to come closer to Yajna site. **Both are known to be the excellent scavengers**. But a Hyena moves in the night & a Vulture is active during day time. After seeing the left over organs of sacrificed animal & carcass near the site of Yajnas, **Dasas** (Hyenas) & **Dasyus** (Vultures) would be staying around for a long time & creating problems or disturbing Yajna ceremony. They were the uninvited guests at the site of Yajna. Due to their ugly looks, 'rite less' behaviour & unpleasant voices, presence of both at the site of Yajna would have been considered as an inauspicious sign. Dasas & Dasyus are also called as **Brahma-dvisah** means those who do not understand devotion or hate knowledge based rituals. On some occasions, use of a burning wood would have driven these animals away from the site (described in Rigved as **Agni** destroys **Pura of Dasas** & also kills **Dasyus**), but when it was beyond the control of the Priests, they used to expect **Indra** to slay them as these foreigners were after the meat which was meant for **God Indra**. Vultures, being powerful flyers, would not yield so easily would keep attacking the site just to snatch the pieces of meat. Therefore correct meaning of the word **Dasyu** in present context would be **Pirate** or **Monster**. Special Yajna ritual having sacrifices of many animals would be lasting for nearly a full day or more also.

Vultures (Dasyus) generally build their nests on the tall trees & rock cliffs (defined as **Distant Dwelling** in **Rigved**) so that they cannot be accessed by others easily. In rigvedic hymns, vulture nests are defined as the forts. But the Thunderstorms and Heavy Rains (hailstorms) can damage or destroy the nests completely. When the nests used to get demolished due to heavy rains, it is mentioned in rigvedic hymns as God **Indra** has destroyed the **forts** (living places) of **Dasyus** & called him as **Purandara** (destroyer of enemy forts). When the **Vultures** used to get killed, it is said that God **Indra** has slayed the **Dasyus**.

Similarly, during day time, **Hyenas (Dasas)** live in the burrows or dens. Due to heavy rains when a stream of water used to enter the dens, it is defined in the Hymns that the **Puras** (places of living of **Dasas**) got destroyed. And as usual, this is also credited to the God **Indra** assuming **He** has ordered the rains after Yajna ritual. It should also be noted here that the **Dasas** are described those who **Dwell in darkness** (probable meaning is- live/hide in dark place during day time i.e. dens & also move in the night) but not the **Dasyus**. An aerial war fight between God **Indra** & the **Dasyus** has been described in some of the hymns clearly indicative of **Dasyus** can fly.

In my views, rigvedic term **Pura** stands for a place of living either on the ground or underground & **Castle/Fort** means a place of living on high rise such as on mountains/hills or trees.

With the increase in number of Yajnas being performed in I-SVC region, means large number of animals' sacrifices & hence assurance of regular food to the Hyenas & Vultures. This could have led to rise in population of Hyenas(Dasas) & Vultures(Dasyus) in that area (before making any comment or framing opinion in haste, it is requested to get information on **Hyenas** & **Vultures** that are found in present-day Pakistan & North India ;& compare their characterstic features with the descriptions of the **Dasas** & **Dasyus** given in Rigved).

To overcome the frequent problem of disturbances caused by dasas & dasyus during the sacrifices of animals, the Priest would have found out an alternative; **Soma**, a drink or juice as a sacrificial substance that would not attract **Dasas** & **Dasyus**. Earlier, Soma drink would just have

been used to get intoxicated & so as, not to get distracted or disturbed by the external factors.

Rain, Yajna, Vritra & Vajra: From various Rigvedic Hymns, it is clear that Yajna was initially introduced to please the **Gods** to overcome some problems including water being faced by Rigvedic or Harappan society. As almost all civilisations were developed & prospered on the banks of various rivers, water was & has been the most important factor in survival of the people of different era.

Past 10,000 years history of Indian Subcontinent show that it receives summer rains due to south-west & north-east winds (monsoon) & some winter rains due to western disturbance. Western disturbances originate in Mediterranean sea, move towards Black sea & then bring rains/thunder-showers to Persia (Iran) & I-SVC area (present-day Pakistan). During mature Harappan period, whenever there was a delay in summer rain or Indus valley area received scanty rainfall, the priests would be arranging special Yajnas at various localities to please God Indra.

During rainy seasons, sometimes we observe that clouds are present in the sky but do not give rain. Also sometimes, clouds come & go quickly without pouring. During Rigvedic period also people would have experienced this happening and wiser men would have imagined it as an act of a Demon called **Vritra/ Vrita** (serpent /dragon probably means that moves with great speed) who sometime hides behind the clouds & removes or sucks water from the clouds & unless He is killed, (this concept is based on a mythological story, Indra Killing Vritra)) they would not receive any rain. In some of the rigvedic hymns it is mentioned that God Indra shatters the forts & kills Vrita; the serpent & this way gets water released in the seven rivers .

Then rigvedic priests would perform Yajna to plead Indra to act against the demon; Vritra. Agni; the fire, would act as a messenger/vehicle and dried plants, birds, animals etc would be offered as the sacrifices to please Indra & make **him** to act. When rain clouds would gather & lightening would occur in the sky, priests would say “ See, Indra has listened to our prayers & now He has started using his weapon, Vajra/ thunderbolt, to kill demon Vritra/Vrita”. After receiving sufficient rain, the priests would feel satisfactory about Yajna. This would have increased the faith of the people in Yajna ceremony. These things would have probably continued for another 200 years without much problem.

During Rigvedic time, Yajnas were mainly performed to live in harmony with the nature, to solve various problems faced by the society, to fulfil the desire of noble/royal persons, to honour respectable persons of the society; & to pray for well being of all human beings so that each one would experience peace, prosperity & plenty in day to day life.

Revolt against Human Sacrifice and formation of Avestan Society:

During the later Harappan period (2000 to 1900 BCE), there would have been frequent failure of rainy seasons causing panic situation among the people of I-SVC. Lives of animals & human-beings would have been in severe distress / danger due non-availability of water. When despite performing several Yajnas at various locations did not yield desired results, people would have started losing interest in Yajna ceremony. **Then as a last resort, the hardcore priests would have decided to go for human sacrifice on a large scale** (this is because, **wild fire also leads to loss of human**). When Yajnas with animals as well as human sacrifices were being performed in a big way at many places, after seeing a blood pool everywhere, some sensitive priests from different locations would have got emotionally disturbed & then come out openly against the move & strongly opposed it. Finally, influential hardliner priests would have told the **Leaders** that otherwise also animals & people would be dying for want of water & food, & somehow managed to convince the society leaders to isolate the opponents of human sacrifices. Rebels would have been outcast/excommunicated and outcaste (thrown out of priests' community similar to present-day **Khap Panchayat decision**) as well from the towns/cities.

When rebelled persons (priests & their followers from other communities) did not find any

point in living in isolated conditions, they would have decided to leave the localities & slowly moved together towards north-western direction (around 1900 BCE). Probably they first went & settled in Swat valley (present-day in Pakistan) & then moved upwards to Helmand area (a region in present-day Afghanistan). Subsequently, they would have established an independent Avestan society on monotheism and rejected main gods of Indus Valley Civilization & also categorized them as Demons/daeva (specifically, **Indra was their main target** as **He** failed to meet the expectations of Rigvedic people despite performing Yajna regularly or could not solve the water problem of the people) but defined Ahura/asura as the highest deity. They would have modified Yajna ceremony discarding sacrifices of human-beings, but retained fire worship with **Soma(Haoma)** as the principal sacrificial substance. This could be the reason for existence of some similarities between Rigvedic & early Avestan societies. By 1500 BCE, an independent Avestan Society would have been existed in Helmand region that had moved away from I-SVC but continued with its **Oral Tradition** of transferring the knowledge from one generation to next.

My personal feeling is that the word **Avesta** could have been derived from Sanskrit word **Aveda**. Probably, **A-Ved** means those who do not believe in proper Vedic rituals. There are many words in **Sanskrit** when get prefixed with a letter 'A' (अ), they convey exactly opposite meanings (similar to words **Theist** & **Atheist** in English). As the rebels were boycotted by hardcore Vedic Priests, they would have insultingly called the rebels as **Aved** & the place they shifted & started living would have been initially called as **Avedsthal**. From **Avedsthal** it would have first become **Avedsthan**, & then **Avestan** that finally turned into totally new word **Avest**. This is similar to the Sanskrit word, **Medha** becoming **Mazda** in avest language. (Practical meaning of **Ahura Mazda** could be, “Apply your mind & use your brain/wisdom. Do not follow traditions blindly”). Later on the avestan people called their land as *Airyanam Vaejo*.

(It should be noted here that around 14 to 15 centuries later, **Buddha** also questioned the purpose of Yajna rituals & also criticized the Priests for animal sacrifices being made during that period. Several cases of Human sacrifices for just to discover fictitious hidden wealth(**Gupt Dhan**), are still being reported from various corners of India).

Modifications of Yajnas: Earlier Yajnas would mainly be performed for the well being of the society as a whole, but after the collapse of Indus Valley Civilization (during 1200 to 800 BCE), **variants of Yajnas** such Ashvamedh Putrakameshti,, Rajsuya etc. would have been introduced as the **need base modifications or innovations** in the later period. It appears that most of these new Yajnas were exclusively designed for Noble/Royal/Rich people for their personal benefits or glorifications. In true sense, these Yajnas can be termed as **Fancy Yajnas**.

Here one must keep in mind that whether it is Yajna or Railway locomotive or mobile phone, progress in any society generally occurs in a phased manner. Take the case of a Locomotive, the earliest locomotive was running on steam, then came diesel engine & now it is electric engine. Similarly, there is a vast difference between the first mobile that came into market & the present-day smart phone. In other words, all types of yajnas that are known today, were not developed during Harappan period but were added during post-Vedic period after the collapse of I-SVC.

In other words, as world moves with time, many things do change for the betterment & progress in the society occurs as per the requirements of new generations. Things do not remain in static condition for a long time.

Aryan Invasion or Migration Theory; Some Entertaining features:

Since many years, there has been ongoing debate on the subject “who were Aryans?”. Some say **Aryan** were originally from Indus Valley Civilization & others claim that they were the Outsiders & do not belong to IVC at all. But there is a unity among various researchers that Aryans

have composed Rigvedic Hymns in India only. Now we will take up the theories of Aryan Invasion & Migration , one by one.

Aryan Invasion Theory: A British archaeologist in mid 1940s came out with an idea that **Aryans** were Barbaric tribesmen came from north, then invaded & killed **Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization (I-SVC)** people. Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak once said that Arctic sea was the original home of Aryans & then they moved southwards & settled in Europe, Iran, India & other places.

To consider the Aryan Invasion Theory in detail, we shall purposefully **begin at the beginning** i.e. we shall assume that Aryans (Barbaric nomadic tribe) were living somewhere in Northern Ural mountain ranges & they started their journey towards southwards around 1700 BCE. First they invaded **Sintashta culture**, (also known as the **Sintashta-Petrovka culture or Sintashta- Arkaim culture**) in Southern Urals of Eurasian Steppes on the border of Eastern Europe & Central Asia. After spending few years there, they passed through the region of Andronovo Grave Culture & then invaded **Bactria-Margiana Archaeological Complex (BMAC)** zone. Later on, around 1500 BCE, they finally invaded **I-SVC** area & killed all IVC people & subsequently, established themselves as the founders of Rigvedic culture in India.

Till date, no conclusive evidence about mass killings by any war fight or Invasion has been found in I-SVC region, & hence Aryan Invasion Theory has remained for academic interest only.

Aryan Migration Theory: The supporters of Aryan Migration theory (AMT) mainly go by the absence of physical evidence of Horse remains & Chariot in I-SVC area. In some of the Rigvedic Hymns, use of horse & chariot has been clearly mentioned. Also as per the procedure of Ashvamedh Yajna, horse sacrifice is a must. History tells us that Horses were first domesticated around 4000 BCE in the Central Asia region and many horse burials & chariots have been found in **Sintashta-Petrovka culture** (2100 to 1600 BCE). That is why, AMT believers say that it is the Sanskrit speaking Aryans who came from Central Asia, brought Horse & Chariot culture to India & first settled in IVC area & composed Vedas using ancient Sanskrit (1500 to 1200 BCE). Earlier researchers used to say that around 1500 BCE, Aryans migrated from Caucasian region via Persia but now some propose that they would have moved from BMAC through present-day Afghanistan and then Swat valley (north-west Pakistan) and finally to Indus Valley.

Researchers who back the AMT, think that BMAC would have acted as a nodal centre from where Aryans would have gone in three different directions. Firstly, around 1500 BCE, one group migrated from Bactria region to southern Afghanistan & from there it got split into two branches, one went to Persia in south- west direction forming Avestan Culture & other moved to Swat Valley down south, where they first developed Gandhar Grave culture & then shifted to Indus Valley.

Around same period(1500 BCE), another group of Aryans, migrated in western direction & settled in Anatolia-Syria region where they formed the **Mitanni dynasty &** ruled over the northern Euphrates-Tigris region from **1475 to . 1275 BCE**. Their argument is based on the presence names of rigvedic deities in Mitanni-Hittites treaty as well as Avestan literature.

If we analyse these events carefully, we find that cuneiform inscriptions available from Mitanni regime clearly indicate Indra, Mitra, Varuna, & Nasatya as the gods similar to Rigved while as in Avestan literature they are described as Demons. Considering three groups of Aryans having migrated from BMAC in the three different directions, during the same period but exhibiting discrepancies in interpretation of the same characters, add contradictions & confusion as well. It also creates mismatch or discontinuity in the **chain of logical thinking**.

Also it is highly difficult to accept the story that Aryans from BMAC brought Chariot to India. This is because so far no direct conjoint evidence of remains of horse and chariot has been reported from BMAC area. Secondly, it would be impossible to cross Hindu-Kush ranges with horse driven chariot. If it is so, then as shown in **The Ten Commandments movie**, in which the sea

makes the way for **Moses**, similarly, in this case also, all the mountains & the valleys falling on the way to India, on their own, would have created smooth path for Charioteers Aryans to move from BMAC to Indus region.

Now we consider **Nomadic Aryans** came to India without horse & chariot when Indus Valley was already abandoned by the people (around 1500 BCE), means they practically landed in **No Man's Land**, roamed around the area freely without any resistance, then decided to settle there, then conducted **Naming ceremony** (*Namkaran Vidhi*) of all living, non-living things present in that area including flora & fauna, rivers, mountains etc & then started composing Rigvedic Hymns. This picture looks similar to *Alice in Wonderland* story. In **Ramayana** there is a story of **Walya** (tribesman) getting transformed to **Sage Walmiki** who becomes writer of Ramayana subsequently. Shall we believe that similar thing would have actually happened around 1500 BCE in IVC area?

Another question comes in my mind that what made tribal Aryans to compose Rigved in India? Probably they would be two to five thousands in number but I-SVC population at its peak period was around a million (ten lacs). Considering population of migrated Aryans, they would have needed relatively less water compared to I-SVC people & hence would not have felt water scarcity as was experienced by I-SVC. Had they noticed drought like situation in Indus Valley around 1500 BCE, they could have gone back to Swat Valley, place where they had stayed earlier. Also number of rivers available was far more for a small group of Migrated Aryans. If the water was available in sufficient quantity, then, there was no need of description in the hymns about the fight between God **Indra** & Demons **Vritra & Vala**. Then what was the real problem they had to face that compelled them to go for Yajnas? Or migrated Aryans used to perform Yajnas just for entertainment purpose or as a time pass? How amusing it is?

Excavations at various sites revealed that BMAC had well developed material culture. The novelty, workmanship quality and variety of artefacts recovered from BMAC sites clearly show its superiority over the I-SVC. BMAC people extensively used Bronze, Gold, Silver, Ceramic materials for making various articles. Also, it had implemented well developed irrigation practices for agricultural use. Some researchers firmly believe that Aryans migrated from BMAC area to Indus Valley area around 1500 BCE, then question comes, why did they not bring BMAC material culture with them to India? Take the case of India; after the liberalization (initiated in the year, 1991) since last 25 years, from material culture point of view, Indian society has moved closer to American & Europeans societies. But when we consider key behavioural aspects such as punctuality, discipline, social equality, civic sense, frankness, cleanliness, dignity of labour, opposition to exploitation etc, it is far behind that of western counterparts. Why? In other words, anywhere in the world, it is the development in material culture, that attracts public attention first & also gets readily accepted by the people whereas, in any society, behavioural (moral values/ethics) or philosophical changes do occur at a slower pace. Greek, Muslims, Portuguese, Britishers; all the rulers brought their different styles of Architectures/ material cultures in India & can be seen in the form of various monuments.

Surprisingly, some say that War Chariot, Spoke Wheel, Axel, Wagon have come from BMAC. If it is so, then why other things developed in BMAC did not reach India in a big way? Also chariot use was limited to very selected & influential/rich people only.

Also we must remember that in **Mitanni** inscriptions & **Avestan** literature, **Nasatya**, is specifically mentioned & not Asvins. Why is it so? Whether it means that Asvins/Ashvins terms have been added during the later period (around 1200 to 1000 BCE) after the introduction of real Horses & War Chariots in India?

Sanskrit language; its instinctive nature & distinct features:

Some linguistic scholars, based on similarity of a few words, try to connect Sanskrit

language with other European & Iranian languages & strongly propose that from a Proto-Indo-European (PIE) language, the ancient Sanskrit language was originated somewhere in Eurasian Steppes or Caucasian region. To solve the problem of existing similarities among the various languages, they defined Proto-Indo-European (PIE) language as the main source for all Indo-European languages. From here, they started comparing grammar, sound system & syntax of different languages, then classified & grouped them into different types. But the approach used by linguist experts in solving the problem of Indo-European origin is not acceptable to many archaeologists. Since there is no concrete evidence, generally, archaeologists (who go by factual material evidence), do not agree about the antiquity of Proto-Indo-European. Some say it was spoken in 8000 BCE, others say as late as 2000 BCE, and still others regard it as an abstract idea that exists only in linguists' heads and therefore cannot be assigned to any one time.

Some historians believe that Vedic Sanskrit was developed during 1500 to 1200 BCE in the northern Punjab (Sapt Sindhu Pradesh), & with the expansion of Vedic culture, later on it got spread to western Gangetic Plain. It is a phonetic language, now considered to be practically dead by many but still has historical significance from Indian point of view.

Unfortunately, the similarities existing between Sanskrit & other languages have created more problems for Rigvedic Aryans, their origin in specific & Sanskrit in general. Due to this fact, Sanskrit has become main target of attack for many researchers & that is why, they have been saying that Sanskrit speaking Aryans came from outside & were not original inhabitants of India .

But language similarity alone cannot decide origin of any culture. It has been explained earlier, due to revolt against human sacrifices, Avestan people got separated from Vedic society as early as 1900 BCE. Whereas **Mitanni dynasty** ruled Syria region from 1475 to 1275 BCE. It is quite possible that Mitanni people would have gone from I-SVC area to Syria during the worst period of IVC (1800 to 1600 BCE) when it was being abandoned by many I-SVC residents. Since Sanskrit was their language, probably they would have introduced it to the people of that area.

If at all, actual Horse & War Chariot culture, the terms associated with them have come to India from outside, then they would have come to India from Sintashta-Caucasian-Persia-Baluchistan /Khyber pass route during the last phase of Mitanni period & not from BMAC via Afghanistan route.

When we take a close look at some Indian languages, we find some strange facts. In Bengali, Sanskrit word **Vimal** is written & pronounced as **Bimal** (**Bimal Roy**, famous film producer & director). In Prakrit, Hindi, Marathi languages, Sanskrit words Parn (पर्ण) & Karn (कर्ण) are written & pronounced as Paan(पान)& Kaan(कान) respectively. This does not mean that Sanskrit has accepted these changes & added these newly formed words to its vocabulary, but it keeps safe distance from the changes & maintains its purity in its own style. One more example from Indian English; in North India, some people pronounce English words **School & Station** as **eSchool & eStation**. But that has not changed the spellings of original English words. As Sanskrit & Avesta Languages have some common or similar words that are pronounced differently, some experts try to convince that Avesta is the mother of Sanskrit. If we observe phonetics & structure carefully, actually it is other way round. Other than **Sanskrit** , is there any language in the world that has so many names for same feature/character? Just to mention a few; Earth, water, sun, air, sky, hell, river moon etc. But there is no doubt that over a period of time, it has accepted some words from foreign languages & some from tribal languages of India but in its own terms & style.

In ancient times, there were several languages spoken in different parts of world. But due to lack of knowledge of script they remained in oral forms for a very long duration. There would have been many common words among them, but those would have been spoken in different style or accent of that region. When these languages were produced in written format, using suitable scripts, due to non-availability of exact letters to describe pronounced word, newly framed words would have taken altogether different form & would have lost original pronunciation. For Example, in

English, there are no exact letters for Sanskrit letters ण, ठ, ञ etc. but nearest equivalent letters **n,th,& L** are respectively used instead. In this way, some changes/distortion /corruption /modification in spoken to spoken; & then spoken to written; & written to spoken words would have occurred with time & locations(who knows, after few years, some philologists would say that Sanskrit word योग/Yog has its origin in Europe as it is spelt & pronounced as **Yoga** in English). But even after the collapse of I-SVC, for more than 3500 years, Sanskrit language mainly remained with Priestly Community, like a **Closely Guarded Family Secret**. That is why after so many years also, it could retain its originality in structure & exact pronunciation & purity to a greater extend. This can be termed as the **Exact Reproduction of Ancient Voices**. In other words, the **Basic Instinct** (uncompromising nature about the fundamentals) of the Ancient Priests, who spoke Sanskrit, was the main reason for the retention of its (Sanskrit) distinct features. **When we listen to the Vedic Hymns, we experience rhythmic and harmonic waves of the wordy world of that era; when we perform Puja & chant mantras together, we submit ourselves with devotion and get emotionally attached (faith) to the God; & when we receive blessings from anyone, we feel God's touch in them.** This is the beauty of Sanskrit Language.

But due to the **Tug of War** between two opposite sides, Sanskrit gets pulled apart often. Sometimes, it has to undergo **dope test** for similar words, foreign origin or loan words, & sometimes it is subjected to **lie detector test** for proper/meaningful translation or true interpretation of its words or sentences. Unfortunately, since many years, on several occasions, Sanskrit, one of the oldest & the finest languages of world, has been subjected to **Agnipariksha/ Fire trial** at the will of various philologists, historians and archaeologists of the world.

Panini explained meaning of the word, **Sanskrit** as **Pure**. Therefore, in **future** also, Sanskrit language would continue to **present** the **past** to the coming generations in a **Spotless** manner. Even today, Sanskrit language guides our journey through the **towering excellence of textual master-pieces** such as Vedas, Upanishadas, Puranas, Epics, and Brahmanas etc. that were composed by ancient people using their extra-ordinary vision & imaginations but also survived via oral tradition.

Question of River Saraswati: Saraswati River has been mentioned in Rigved in many places. It is also called as inspirer for composing Hymns. Since the river Saraswati does not exist today, some people term its existence as a mythical river. But some think that it is sleeping river that flows underground. According to Rigved, River Saraswati lies between the Yamuna and Sutlej rivers of present days then flows into sea..

Modern scholars identify the Saraswati River with the Ghaggar-Hakra river system, which flows through north-western India and Pakistan. But recent research shows that it is monsoon rain-fed river system & does not originate in Himalaya. Some say that due to tectonic shift or major earthquake, it would have got disappeared.

But the fundamental question is; why the Priestly community or Brahmins of ancient time were so particular about river Saraswati? To get exact answer for this question is very difficult but it appears to me that ancient Rigvedic Priests must be having a close association with the river called, **Saraswati. It should be kept in mind that unlike Gods or Demons(who could be imaginary), a river is physical entity could be practically seen & experienced by many but would be described with exaggeration in the different fashions.** When we carefully observe I-SVC map showing presence of ancient Ghaggar-Hakra river, it clearly indicates that Saraswati would be flowing in the middle of the I-SVC region and hence was readily accessible from east, west, north, south zones of I-SVC. Some locations/*ashrams/mathas* on the bank of River Saraswati would have served meeting places or interacting points for learned persons of that era. There they would have exchanged their ideas, discussed various issues related to Rigved/ Yajnas. Also there they would have transferred their knowledge from one generation to other (just like Gurukul system). In other

words, these places would have served as the active learning centres for Rigvedic priests (similar to Taxashila or Nalanda or Varanasi/Kashi were known in the past). When Saraswati lost its existence due to climate change or tectonic movements, with the decline of I-SVC, priestly people would be left with the memories of their learning experiences on the bank of Saraswati. Probably due to this reason, when Legends were constructed in the later period, God Brahma's wife was named as Saraswati in the mark of respect for that river.

Some historians say that the river *Haraxvati/ Haraxvaiti* (present- day Helmand river that flows in southern region of Afghanistan) mentioned in the oldest Avesta could be the River Saraswati. **Panini**, an ancient Sanskrit scholar & grammarian(6th or 4th century BCE) who likely lived in the Gandhara area (presently in Pakistan) when gone through Rigvedic hymns minutely would have come to know the fact that ***Saraswati river*** mentioned in Rigved was nothing but ***Haraxvati that flows in Avestan region***. Had it been so, he would have ***paid visit to The Holy & Very Special River Haraxvati as Saraswati***; as it was very close to his place of birth (it is believed that he was born in Pushkalavati, present-day Peshawar or Shalatula, a small town near Attock in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/Swat or Gandhara area of Pakistan). Old Gandhara region of Pakistan is close to Helmand region of present-day Afghanistan. But no such reference is available anywhere. As I described earlier, the rebels who had left the I-SVC around 1900 BCE & settled in present-day Helmand region would have named that river in the memory of River Saraswati & over a period of time that would have become Haraxvati; which is similar to Sanskrit words Medha , Yajna, Soma becoming **Mazda, Yasna, Haoma** respectively in the old Avesta.

As Rigvedic Priests were so attached to River Saraswati, their next generations, after shifting to Gangetic plains started calling it as an invisible river joining confluence of Rivers, Ganga & Yamuna at Prayag (Allahabad). Questions come, why did the priests identify only river Saraswati as a sleeping/hidden river? Why did they not mention other rivers of Sapta Sindhu region? This may be due to the fact that except Saraswati all other rivers were physically present in IVC area at that time. To Vedic people, River Saraswati was as important as Peepal Tree(Bodhi-Vriksha of **Gaya**) to Buddha's followers. Both places represent locations for Knowledge Acquisition/Inspiration(similar to the event of of an apple falling from an Apple Tree inspired Sir Isaac Newton to discover the Gravitational Force already existing in the Nature).

Some facts about the matters & relooking at some questioned matters:

It is well known fact that , the Archaeologists look for material evidence unearthed during the excavations . They use very well accepted dating methods & standard practices to ascertain the time period of the events. Also the Archaeologists show keen interests in preserving these ancient features. The Historians try to evaluate the past based on detailed study of various characteristic features/ records/ documents available & arrange the events in a chronological order & then interpreted them in proper context using various methods such as data analysis, logic, statistics etc. But existence of differences of opinions about the past events is the common feature among the various historians & archaeologists. Therefore in case of Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization & Rigved also, some experts see direct connection between them & others state that these two events are totally independent & have no relevance to each other. In the following paragraphs, some facts about the matters & selected questions raised by different experts about the some matters would be discussed.

Swastika: The word 'swastika' derives from Sanskrit words in a compound form , 'Su' means 'good', 'asti' means 'to exist', and 'ka' means neutral gender. Swastika stands for universal welfare i.e. peace, prosperity and good luck. It is generally believed that swastika symbol was originated in Indian subcontinent & then went outside. It is considered to be a sacred and auspicious symbol in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism and hence is being used on several functions since ancient time. But during the excavation of I-SVC sites that began after the year 1920, when

swastika seals were unearthed, then only, whole world came to know that about its special place in I-SVC. For Indian religions, it is the symbol of goodwill/good fortune but to others, it is just a geometric or design pattern. But based on its references in Vedic literature & its use during I-SVC period, when some experts try to establish a link between I-SVC & Rigvedic period, others simply criticise it & call it as a coincidence.

Bangles: Since ancient time, traditionally, bangles are being used by the women of the Indian Subcontinent. Bangles are made from shells, glass, metals, or plastics . Dancing Girl figurine that was excavated in Mohonjo-Daro site (2500 BCE) clearly shows that bangles were very popular among the women during I-SVC time too. Also decorated shell bangles belonging to Mauryan period have been found during the excavation of many Mauryan sites. When some people draw attention to the existing cultural continuity between I-SVC & present days, critics of OIT theory give standard answer “Migrated Aryans would have continued some practices of I-SVC people after moving to Gangetic Plains”.

Grita/ Ghee: Ghrita (ghee) is clarified butter that is used in **Yajnas to increase Ojas, means that creates both strength/energy & lustre/brilliance by forming a bond between the energetic and the material body.** In Vedas , Ghee is called ‘first and the most essential of all foods”. When ghee is added to Agni, it enhances the intensity of fire & also increases effectiveness of prayers. Continuous recitation of Sanskrit Hymns would create a live atmosphere & Gods would then be invited to have special food/sacrifices of their choices & then would be requested to fulfil the wishes of the Yajna Performers. Surprisingly, in no ancient Eurasian languages, the word similar to Grit/grita has been found. But age-old tradition of converting milk to Ghee is well known to the Indians and also mentioned in ancient literatures.

Missing of urban culture footprints of I-SVC from Rigvedic Literature : This is very true as there is no description about the urban life during the period of Rigved. But **Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization** had well developed towns/ cities that clearly manifest proper urban planning. That is why supporters of Aryan Migration Theory(AMT) always say that Rigvedic Aryans were not a part of I-SVC. However, Out of India Theory(OIT) believers strongly refute their claim & suggest that Rigved was composed earlier to I-SVC & hence probably urban culture is not mentioned in Rigved.

But this point could be addressed in a different fashion. Hymns of Rigved are composed by various Seers/Sages/Rishis who were living ascetic life. Rigvedic priestly community represents only a section of the I-SVC society that had common interests and common objectives & was closely connected to each other. I-SVC society would be having more heterogeneity, with people from different backgrounds, social classes & probably would be having different customs as well. Hence there are characters like Panis, herders, craftsmen & names of various Kings/tribes(Anu, Druhyu, Yadu, Turvaśa, and Pūru) who fight with each other.

Comparison of **Emperor Ashoka & Adi Shankaracharya** could throw some light on behavioural aspects of a King & a Seer. There is almost 1400 years gap between Collapse of I-SVC(1700 BCE) & **Emperor Ashoka's** regime (3rd century BCE). Similarly, there is also a separation of at least 1000 years between **Emperor Ashok's** rule & **Adi Shankaracharya's** period(8 to 9 century AD). After embracing Buddhism, **Emperor Ashoka** got constructed thousands of Stupas, many Pillars/Edicts at several places in Indian Subcontinent. Although there is no document/ record available about his reign, but various stupas, inscriptions give sufficient idea about his kingship. **Adi Shankaracharya**, who travelled across the Indian Subcontinent, got established four Mathas in four directions (Puri, Joshi Math/Badrinath, and Dwaraka & Shringeri) for the revival of Hinduism. But in comparison to **Emperor Ashoka's material work**, his Mathas were only simple structures due to his ascetic nature. This example clearly brings out the

differences in objectives & approach of a Powerful Ruler & a Seer. One more distinct feature of **Emperor Ashok's** rule is that, being King, he could send his ambassadors to different countries to propagate Buddhism, whereas, **Adi Shankaracharya** during his short span of life, made serious efforts to revive Hinduism within Indian subcontinent only. This is just to emphasise that ancient Seers or Rishis lacked resources but showed more interest in spiritual/philosophical activities than earning personal glorification or publicity or fame through any artificial activity.

Rigvedic hymns also provide good insight on psychology of the Priests who composed hymns & performed Yajnas. It is evident from some hymns that Rigvedic community lacked fighting qualities/spirit as that of the warrior class people. That is why, to control Dasas & Dasyus, they needed regular help from their favourite Gods; Indra & Agni. Hence Aryans Invasion Theory does not hold water due to this inherent quality (timidness) of the Priests. Also due to lack of courage/ guts/ aggressiveness, a long distance migration of the Aryans from outside to unknown area of Indus Valley region, on their own, is next to impossible. To date, no concrete evidence of archaeological, linguistic, cultural or genetic nature of a foreign influx in IVC region has been found. Additionally, Rigved does not indicate movement of the people from one area to other. Post-rigvedic literature also has no mention about mass scale migration of the people from Indus Region to Gangetic Plains. Hence invasion/migration does not become an issue in the discussion about Rigved & I-SVC.

Absence of evidence of Fire Altars/Yajna-kunds: Aryan Migration Theory(AMT) supporters always question about the absence of Fire Altars/ Yajna-kunds at the sites of **Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization**. As Yajnas were performed by the Priests in an open atmosphere by making the temporary structures, demanding a proof for the same should not become the point of debate.. This is explained by the example given below;

Emperor Akbar ruled India from 1556 to 1605 AD. Initially, he began his rule from Delhi, then made Agra as his capital. Then he got constructed a new capital at Fatehpur Sikri & lived there for a few years. Once again he shifted to Agra. For almost fifteen years, he ruled from Lahore. Now the question is “**Can Archaeologists/Historians show the world the Chulhas/Cooking Ranges /Cooking Stoves/Hearths used at different locations on which food for Akbar, the Great was prepared during his reign?**” Akbar's story is just 400 to 450 years old but I-SVC case is nearly 4000 years old. This question could be extended to all powerful kings of India.

To date, AMT supporters also, could not provide any evidence for Fire altars & also horses and chariots that would have been used by Migrated Aryans during the period 1500 to 1000 BCE. Therefore question of asking proof for Fire altar/Yajnakund, horses and chariots to others becomes irrelevant.

It is a strange but factual thing that after the decline of I-SVC, till date, no planned cities or towns constructed on the similar lines of I-SVC, during the period 1500 to 500 BCE have been unearthed in any part of Modern India. It is not known why I-SVC model could not be replicated at any place in India after its abandonment. Probably, the construction experts from I-SVC region would have left I-SVC in search of better opportunities & gone to places like BMAC (even Arkaim in Eurasian Steppes) or Syria(Mitanni as probably they were from I-SVC region)) well before the complete collapse of I-SVC(Or whether the Priests told the people not to construct similar towns as they felt that due to the curse of God Indra, earlier towns/cities were to be vacated?).

Painted Grey Ware(PGW) Culture: At many places in present-day Haryana, Western UP, parts of Rajasthan & MP, Painted Grey Wares have been excavated that are believed to be the characteristics of Iron Age period (1000 to 500 BCE). From the process of their making & quality point of view, Painted Grey Wares represent improvisation/ up gradation over earlier Black & Red wares. It is said that the introduction of iron tools & iron made implements have led to overall development of ancient India in the agricultural field & battlefield also. But some scholars who are

very much fond of Aryan Invasion/Migration Theory are of the view that there could have been second wave of invasion or migration from the northwest side to the east side of India that has brought Painted Grey Ware culture & also Iron to India. They use Eurasian Steppes (linguistic base, Horse, Material Culture) as the stepping stones to get the access to Indian Subcontinent, then try to assert that, it is because of “*The Foreign Brains & Hands*” (i. e. **Migrated Aryans**), ancient India could progress in Spiritual & Material life. But they systematically ignore the well developed Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization(I-SVC); (Sadist mentality, what else?).

In the History of the world, there are several cases of discoveries, inventions, materials & methods, philosophy, tools & techniques etc that have been evolved independently, sometimes simultaneously or at different times but at different locations, without the knowledge or contact of each others. Two such examples are given below.

Archery is known to man as early as hunting- gatherings stage. Different nomadic tribes living in different parts of the world, without having any contact with each others for several thousand years were using archery to kill the prey. Who taught them bow & arrow technique? An ancient negrito tribe called *Jarawa* that presently lives on Andaman islands (situated in Bay of Bengal) of India (Jarawas have been living in isolation for more than 4000 years but recently, they came into contact with others in the year 1998 but still do not wear clothes) also uses Bow & Arrows for hunting. How did they come to know to about this?

Additionally, ancient **Pyramids & Similar Structures** have been found in many parts of the world to include, Egypt, China, Peru, India(**Gopuram**), Indonesia, Central America(Maya) & North America etc. But there is no proof that the experts from Egypt had gone to various places or otherwise trained the people of different region on the subject; how to construct Pyramid or Similar structures.

Therefore, Painted Grey Ware culture found in northern region of India is also an indigenously developed material cultural and did not involve foreign hands from the North-West.

Concept of Hept Hendu/ Sapta Sindhu: Ancient Avestan literature, Vendidad-I names *hepta hāndu* as fifteenth of the sixteen places of where *Aryans* can live. It means that the word, *Hept Hendu* used by Avestan people clearly identifies the **land or place of habitat**. Literally, in **Sanskrit**, the term/phrase *hept hāndu* means *Sapta Sindhu* (gramatically, it should be *Sapta Sindhava*). In **Rigved**, the term called *Sapta Sindhava* explains mainly about the rivers flowing & does not mean the land or region where people reside. Therefore possibility of transfer of this (very concept as country/ territory of seven rivers) phrase from Rigvedic region to Avestan region through regular contacts, is the most unlikely event. In Rigved, we also find **Nadistuti sukta** that gives names of various rivers which were flowing in Indus region during rigvedic period. But the beauty of the term **Hept Hendu/ Sapta Sindhu** is that, it not only provides very precise & accurate geographical description of the region but also gives **unique identity** to the territory where rigvedic people lived earlier. If we take a close look at the Modern-day Pakistan Map showing various flowing rivers in it, we find that **Sutlej** (old name, Sutudri), the main tributary of the River Sindhu, joins the latter almost after the completion of half of the total distance it (River Sindhu) travels in Present-day Pakistan. This is to stress that to get complete idea about Sapta Sindhu area, one has to be fully familiar with north-western Pakistan & total Punjab region (India inclusive of present-day Haryana & Pakistan) & possibly Kashmir also(relatively very large area). And this can only happen when the people live in that region for a longer duration. One must also keep in mind that during ancient time, there was no **Information Age** as what we see today. In other words, Ancestors of Avestan people who termed **Hept Hendu** as a land of residence, must have lived in that region for a very long time. When they left that region due to revolt/differences, they carried the live memory of flowing river Saraswati (probably it would have gone dry at the time of their departure) with them, & when they got settled in present day south-east Afghanistan (*Helmand*

valley), named the river of that region as Saraswati that subsequently became **Haraxvaiti**.

Ancestors of Rigvedic Aryans, who migrated eastwards after the collapse of I-SVC, would have witnessed disappearance of River Saraswati. & hence, their descendants who settled on the bank of River Ganga, named the River Saraswati as the invisible river that joins the confluence of Ganga-Yamuna at Prayag (Allahabad).

Now, consider the history of origin of the word **Homeopathy**. **Samuel Hahnemann**, the founder of Homeopathy, developed a new medical science based on the principle that “like cures like” & coined the new term **Homeopathy**. But in order to distinguish his newly developed medical practice from earlier existing/ traditional medical methods, he also coined the term **Allopathy** (**allopathic medicine**). This means to say that **Hahnemann** himself coined both terms; **Homeopathy & Allopathy**. In other words, **Ancient Avestan People who revolted against hardcore rigvedic community**, would have used the phrase **Hept Hendu/ Sapta Sindhu** representing as a country **of rigvedic people**, so as to differentiate their new area of living (**Airyanam Vaejo**) from rigvedic Aryans’ i.e. Indus-Saraswati region and also tried to impress upon the rigvedic people that they were the **Real or Original Aryans**.

Presence of Rath/Chariot & Ashva/Horse in Rigved: Some scholars when talk on the Rigved, always comment about the extensive reference of Rath & Ashva available in various hymns and hence try to connect Rigvedic Community with Eurasian Steppes (**Sintashta-Petrovka culture of the period, 2100 to 1600 BCE**).

But the basic question is, “**In Rigved, who use horse drawn chariots?**” Answer is, Rigvedic Deities such as 'Usha, Agni & Indra, Pusan'. Rigvedic Priests, using their imagination created various Nature Gods with special powers so that they can defeat the strong Demons/Asuras who are the trouble creators for the society. Both deities & demons were the product of Poets' imaginations. But the Nature Gods cannot use normal mode of transports such as bullock carts to defeat the Demons who are also very powerful, & hence the Priests felt the need of a special vehicle exclusively for the Gods, and therefore '**Rath** or Chariot' was created out of imagination only. Now the Rath has to move with great speed & has to overcome all hurdles created by the Asuras, and again an imaginary animal that was not known to them called '**Ashva**' was created who could draw the chariot as per the requirement of God. In the Hymns of Rigved, **Ashva** is defined as 'In spirit, as swift as Wind in motion'. It is also described as “In thought, as swift as Indra”. Its practical meaning is “**Very Quick Thinker & Very Fast Mover**”. That is why, some researchers try to link the word **Ashva** with **mobility, agility and resilience** and others with **strength, speed & stamina** that are necessary for a long distance journey. **Yogi Arobindo** has said that the symbolic language of Rigved needs to be studied with an open mind to find out real meanings of the words used in it. Some words which begin with pronunciation as that of **Ashv** that are present in ancient literature are, **Ashvins** means divine twins/**Ashvini Kumar**, **Ashvattha** means Peepal tree & **Ashvatthama**; son of Dronacharya. First two are mentioned in Rigved & third one is part of Mahabharata.

In one of the hymns, it is also described that the river **Saraswati** is as wide & speedy as a (Rigvedic) chariot. what to infer from this comparison? It is nothing but pure **exaggeration**. **The chariot has been given prominent status in Rigved**. Horse-drawn chariots figure mainly in Indo-Iranian mythology. But the comparative study of the ancient Indian(Vedic) & Iranian(Avestan) literature done by some researchers clearly shows that in Vedic texts, various parts of the Rath/ Chariot such as axle, wheel, spoke, yoke, pole etc. have been explicitly described than the avestan literature. When it is believed by many that Horse drawn Chariot has come to both places from Sintashta Culture of Eurasian steppes, then, why do the differences in the description of Chariot parts exist in these two ancient cultures?

Rigvedic Deities use Horse Drawn Chariot, but not individual mount as described in the subsequent Legends. This may be due to the fact that when Legends (Puranas) were being

composed, during that time, Horse Drawn Chariots were already being used by the Kings & Other Noble persons. Hence the composers of the Puranas would have decided to do away with the Chariots for Deities & planned independent Mounts/ Vehicles for some of the Deities. That is why, in Puranas, different deities are shown with different mounts/vehicles / Vahanas. Some mounts are Birds or small animals like Mouse that can never become vehicle in real sense & some are wild animals like Tiger or Lion who cannot be ridden by the common men. While as the vehicles of **Shiv**(Nandi Bull) & **Yam** (He Buffalo) may serve as the mode of transport/vehicles on some occasions for some people. Some Deities can become infinitesimally small or very big as per the situation. Some have unlimited powers & some are equipped with the special weapons for special occasions. This is nothing but Symbolism.

In **Ramayana**, it is described that after defeating **Ravan**, **Ram** uses **Pushpak-Viman** to reach Ayodhya. If we go through the history of invention of an **Aircraft / Aeroplane**, we find that, many researchers from mid nineteenth century to the first decade of twentieth century made serious efforts to develop what is called as **Flying Machine**, but the **Wright Brothers** were the first who successfully demonstrated it to the whole world in the year 1903. But in Indian mythology, (almost 2000 years before the aircraft's invention) the very concept of flying machine was already existing. Well before when it was unknown to many in the world, the idea of flying vehicle was conceived by the some ancient Indians & then visualised as an aerial car called **Pushak-Viman** in the famous epic **Ramayana**. Therefore, for the newly framed English word, **aircraft/aeroplane**, since beginning, a mythological term '**Viman**' is being used in many Indian languages. This means to say that well before arrival of the Central Asian Horse & War Chariot to India, the terms (Ashva & Rath) were already existing in **Rigved** & as the ancestors of **Mitanni Kings** (the Syrian rulers from 1475 to 1275 BCE) had gone to Syria from Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization during the period 1800- 1600 BCE who were very much familiar with **Rigved**, as can be seen from the presence of names of four Rigvedic Deities in the cuneiform inscriptions found in that region and also from the names of the various Mitanni Rulers (their names sound like Sanskrit origin) available, might have already identified the real **Horse & War Chariot** as **Ashva & Rath** respectively.

During the period from 525 AD to 1189 AD, the modern states of **Karnataka** (Kannada Speaking State) & **Maharashtra** (Marathi Speaking State) were ruled by two major dynasties; **Chalukyas** (early Capital- Vatapi/Badami from 543 -753 AD, & later Capital-Kalyani from 973 to 1189 AD) ; & in between **Rashtrakuta** (Capital- Manyakheta from 753 -972 AD). Rulers of both the Dynasties were **Kannada** speaking but they also permitted **Sanskrit** as the other administrative language. **Kannada** (developed around 2nd to 3th century AD) belongs to **Dravidian** Language family & **Marathi** (developed during 8th to 9th century AD) is the part of **Indo-Iranian** family. As present-day **Maharashtra**, for more than six centuries, was under the control of the Prominent Rulers who spoke Kannada, Marathi during its early period was under the influence of Kannada. This can be seen from several Kannada origin words, related to **Close Relations** such as **Tai** (elder sister), **Anna** (elder brother), **Akka** (elder married sister), **Appa** (father), **Aattya** (Father's sister) in Marathi (**Atte** in Kannada), **Ajja-Ajji** (grandfather-grandmother). Also Kannada origin words **Tuppa**(ghee) & **Bhakkare**(Jwar roti) have become **Tup** & **Bhakar** respectively in Marathi.

Above example has just been given to stress the point that I-SVC origin **Mitanni** Rulers whose Ancestors probably spoke Rigvedic Sanskrit, comfortably ruled Syria from 1475 to 1275 BCE despite the fact that the major population spoke other language (probably Hurrian), but also left the permanent mark of their mother tongue(Sanskrit) in the form the inscriptions (treaty between Mitanni & Hittites) and Horse training manual-Kikkuli but in the style of local language.

In all probability, it may be due to the I-SVC origin **Mitanni rulers** of Syria, we find similarity in some words of Rigvedic Sanskrit & the words present in other European languages.

Similarly, for the modern term "**Space Shuttle**" also the equivalent Rigvedic Sanskrit term '**यान**'/Vehicle (spelt as **Yana** in English) is being used in many Indian languages. Indian Space Missions **Chandrayan**- Space Shuttle on Moon, & **Mangalyan**- Space shuttle on Mars are the real

examples. Additionally, during the regime of President **Mr. Ronald Reagan**, (during cold war period) United States of America(USA) planned to develop **Laser** based Missile destruction system to destroy erstwhile **USSR**(present-day **Russia**) fired Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (**ICBM**) in air or at the launch site itself under the programme of Strategic Defence Initiative(**SDI**). One sub-project was titled as “**Shalaka**” which is the Sanskrit word & it's some of the meanings are **Sky, Splendour, Light, Fire, beam of light** etc. The term "**Laser**" originated as an **acronym** for "**light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation**". And the common factor that is associated with Laser & Shalaka is the light. America subsequently, abandoned the SDI project after the collapse of USSR.

Whether it is the case of विमान (Viman/Aircraft) or यान' (Yana/Space shuttle) or शलाका (Shalaka/ Laser based weapon), the fact is that when a new thing envisages in a conceptual form or presented in the physical form, in some part of the world, some people, curiously try to find out the equivalent /matching or similar terms that are already available in the mythological texts. As these three examples are based on the facts, no one should have doubt about them. In other words, symbolism was present during Vedic period and also exists today but in different forms. Various Icons, Logos, Slogans, Flags, Idols/Statues represent different types of Symbolism. In my opinion, in case of Ashva/Horse & Rath/Chariot also similar thing would have happened. But the reference of the **Ashvamedh /ritual** in the later parts of Rigved (Mandala/book I & VIII-X) & Yajurved clearly indicates that the hymns pertaining to Ashvamedh & Yajna in Rigved & Yajurved would have been composed around 1200 to 1000 BCE (after the collapse of I-SVC).

Story of Pani & Cows: In Rigved, there is hymn about **Pani** stealing cows of the priests. Some scholars believe Panis were non-Aryan tribe who were engaged in trade & commerce. In my opinion, **Panis** were very much part of Indus-Saraswati Society & apart from trading with regular items, some **Panis** were also dealing with the sale of domestic animals & as the traders, used to move from one place to other for the same. During one of the worst years experienced by Indus-Saraswati region people, when there was less water available in that region, probably the Priests would have handed over their cows (as cows were the real wealth of the Priests but they were fully engaged with Yajna ritual, not interested to move out of I-SVC)) to Panis just to take them for grazing to a very long distance where grass & water would be available so as to save the cattle from dying. Panis would have been trusted by the Priests just because they were well known to the Priests. After completion of a year or so, when Panis did not return with cows to their original place of living, the Priests would have thought that Panis have stolen their cows & gone somewhere. Hence they requested **Indra** to locate the cows & punish the **Panis**. The Major parts of **Pune, Satara, Ahmednagar, & Solapur districts of Maharashtra** State fall under rain shadow region. Whenever these districts receive less than normal rain fall, Shepherds from these areas take their sheep/goats to other places where water & fodder is available. When **Saurashtra** region of Gujarat state faces drought like situation, then cattle herders of **Kathiawad** area also move to other places to save their cattle. This is still being practiced by many Herders. Hence it appears to me that the first part of the story may be the fact but second part (**Indra** Locating cows using **Sarama** & freeing cows from a cave of **Panis**) would be a myth. Whenever, the Priests could not solve problems faced (such as Dasas, Dasyus, and Panis etc.) by them on their own, then just to console themselves, they used God Indra as the trouble-shooter or saviour for the society.

This thing might have taken place earlier to departure of Avestan people from Saraswati region (around 2000 BCE). With cows, Panis would probably have gone to northward direction or even BMAC area (evidence of existence of trade contacts between I-SVC & BMAC has been found on both sides/locations) & never came back to I-SVC area again.

“It is relatively easy to question someone's answer than answering his/her question.”

Migration & Settlement of Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization People:

Many scholars believe that the collapse of the Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization was caused by climate change. Some experts believe the drying of the Saraswati River, which began around 1900 BCE, was the main reason of migration, while others conclude that a great flood struck the area. Some feel that **monsoons**, or winds that used to bring heavy rains to IVC area, moved eastward causing frequent droughts. Monsoons can be both helpful and detrimental to a climate, depending on whether they support or destroy vegetation and agriculture. It is also said that by 1900 BCE, the Indus Valley climate grew cooler and drier, and a tectonic shift may have diverted or disrupted river systems, which were the lifelines of the Indus Valley Civilization.

Whether it is an environmental disaster or severe drought for many years or outbreak of diseases and death of large number of people, the fact is that Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization was abandoned by the people in a phased manner & it would have started around 1900 BCE & continued till 1700 BCE. Initially, the Harappans may have randomly migrated towards east, stayed temporarily at different places & finally decided to settle along the rivers Ganga & Yamuna where they could have seen surety of water for a whole year & hence established villages and isolated farms there.

To explain the different settlement patterns of migrated I-SVC people in India, I am using four characters/figures of **Dashavatar story**. Although it is purely imaginary, here, I am attempting to link mythology with some historical facts. For all practical purpose, it may be considered as guesswork.

Waman Pattern: Around 1700 BCE, many Priests along with Warrior class & other common people would have started moving towards East for better life & would have temporarily stayed at many places but continued their journey till they found a new lifeline in the form of River Ganga. Around 1400 BCE, Priests or Brahmins who were missing the River Saraswati, would have finally decided to settle along the bank of River Ganga which was mentioned in Rigved. Without using any force, somehow, they would have been successful in convincing various tribes living nearby Ganga river (starting from Uttarakhand) to move away from the river. This is similar to **Waman** of **Dashavtar** story, who, by asking the place to keep three strides, tactfully removes **King Bali** from the throne of Heaven that **Bali** had acquired after defeating King **Indra** & pushes **King Bali** to hell. Tribes who earlier stayed close to river Ganga for years together, would have moved southwards or gone to Himalaya. Brahmin Population of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand & Himachal Pradesh; three states of India, clearly manifests ancient trend of settlement. These three states comprise of more than 10% of Brahmins of their total population which is much higher as compared to other states of India. Before Islamization, in Kashmir too there were sizable numbers of Brahmins living in that region.

In the beginning, the Priests would have settled in the Uttarkhand area along the Ganga & then moved eastwards in Gangetic Plains. This would have occurred around 1400 to 1200 BCE. Subsequently, Priestly community would have got divided into two sections; one who firmly believed in rituals & other who wished to live ascetic/simple life. The ritualistic would have stayed along the river Ganga, first got modified Rigved to suit the new requirement, included some fancy Yajnas for the Kings/Noble persons & here they would have composed other three Vedas also. Additionally, they would have invented new methods of rituals, especially to engage the common people; & then composed Puranas/Legends, Epics, Brahmanas, Manusmriti etc. Here, the Priestly

community would have felt that there is an urgent need to replace God Indra as a Supreme God, as **He** failed to fulfil the wishes of them in I-SVC region & hence accordingly, created Trinity i.e. Brahma, Vishnu & Mahesh with the allocation of independent responsibilities to each of them. The ritualistic Priests were generally called as **Pundits or Purohits**. Some Ritualistic Brahmins from Gangetic plain, subsequently, would have gone to various kingdoms for better opportunities.

While the priests who preferred to live ascetic life were termed as Seers/Sages, Rishis, Sadhus, Yogis would have selected ashrams or mathas as their places of living that would have been located at the foothills of Himalaya or on the bank of rivers but away from the main residential areas. They were the knowledge oriented people, created tradition of meditations/Tapasya, developed philosophical thoughts & would have composed Upanishadas(also called as Vedanta) & Aranyakas based on Guru-Shishya Parampara. Aranyakas, a combination of Rituals & Vedanta, would have been composed by purohits who after retirement from routine life would have joined Vanaprasthashram(forest-dwellings). & lived with sages for some time. Sages/Seers/Rishis developed the concept of Atma (Soul or self), Brahman/ Paramatma(Supreme-being) & tried to impress the Kings/Noble persons with a new philosophy of detachment from the Maya (illusion). During Kumbh- Mela, we see thousands of Sadhus who represent various Akhadas / Mathas gather at the Mela sites to take Holy dip in the sacred rivers Ganga, Kshipra & Godavari.

Ritualistic Brahmins tried to establish **God Fearing** society so that they would have their say everywhere right from birth to death of a person. Ascetic Brahmins/Rishis/Yogis tried to create **God Loving** Society so that man can get connected with the **Universe** rather than chasing **Maya**.

Parashuram Pattern: During Mature Harappan Period, there was well developed maritime trade activity between Indus Valley Civilization & Mesopotamia. Lothal (place in present-day Gujarat state) was supposed to be the main port city of I-SVC from where a long-distance trade by sea route was regularly carried out with Mesopotamian cities. Also many coastal towns like Sotkagen-dor, Sokta Koh and Balakot (near Sonmiani) in present-day Pakistan were used as the small ports for the shipment of the luxury goods like spices, textiles and precious metals etc.

When I-SVC people started abandoning their towns & cities, an aggressive & adventurous leader named **Parashuram** who used to argue with the Senior Priests & regularly fight/confront with the Warrior class (Kshatriya) people, did not want to join other Priests & would have independently led a small section of the society (except Kshatriyas) by sea route using small boats & ships & travelled along the west coast line of Modern India till he found greenery in the land of present-day Kerala state. Presence of lush Greenery along the coastal line of Kerala & adjacent region would have given them assurance of availability of sufficient quantity of water in that area. Dashavatar story tells that it is **Parashuram**, who single handily defeats the Sea, forces it to recede & then reclaims the land from it called as present-day west coast line. Hence West-Coast region including Kerala, Karnataka & Konkan areas is called **Parashuram Kshetra** as well. Due to this legend, Kerala is also called '**Gods Own Country**'. Legend also tells that Parashuram brought some more Brahmins from other areas to make them to settle permanently. Probably, in 1500 BCE the persons, who reached west coast area (Kerala) first had to cut the trees or clear the Jungle to make their residence & here, **Parashuram** would have guided them in cutting trees/shrubs using his special weapon/tool, 'an axe made of special hard stone'. By clearing the forest, the people would recover the land & made it habitable & also cultivable. Therefore, the followers of Parashuram, call him; Ram with an axe.

Ram Pattern: Some **Powerful Warrior tribes** that migrated along with the priests, initially would have preferred present-day Central Utter Pradesh region(Ayodhya or Awadh) to as their first choice of settlement & formed **Kosala kingdom** & made **Ayodhya** (as mentioned in **Ramayana**) as its capital (around 1300 BCE). From here, some noble class people then would have moved

eastwards, captured lands by defeating various ancient tribes of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal & Nepal, then created various kingdoms; Vatsa, Malla, Kashi, Magadha, Anga & Vaji etc in the captured area. These kingdoms formed the major part of Mahajanapadas (sixteen major states) which were existing in Indian Subcontinent during the period 1000 to 600 BCE.. The completion of process of settlement on the lands/plains adjacent to **River Ganga & its various tributaries** (territory extending from present-day Central Uttar Pradesh to Present-day Bihar, Bengal & Nepal) would have occurred during the period 1200 to 1000 BCE.

During 1000 to 800 BCE, the people of newly formed kingdoms that included mostly local tribes & some from warrior class & few priests, would have felt necessity of the language that has simple pronunciation (not tongue twisting like Sanskrit) for communication & this need might have led to the development of **Prakrit & Pali** as their languages. With the support of various kings, common people would have started using them replacing Sanskrit from day to day use. Sanskrit would have retained its status as the language of Priestly/Noble communities & Language of the Courts. **Mauryas & Guptas** were the two major dynasties subsequently, emerged from this region that influenced political set up of India & also left permanent mark on the history of whole Indian Subcontinent. Also the two of greatest religious leaders/ philosophers; **Mahaveer & Buddha** (both belonged to **Kshatriya** class) who are the founders of Jainism & Buddhism religions respectively, were born in this region. Development of Agriculture based economy would have played dominant role in early progress of the region.

Krishna Pattern: Most of the Common People who were mainly dependent on agricultural activities, animal husbandry/herders(cows, sheep, goats), artisans/craft producers etc & living pastoral life in Indus- Saraswati Valley Civilization region would have got settled in the area along the **River Yamuna & its tributaries** starting from present-day Haryana, Delhi, Western Uttar Pradesh, Eastern Rajasthan & Northern Madhya Pradesh as this region was located closer to their earlier homes. In Indian history, it is called as **Kuru** State/Pradesh that was the earliest kingdom existing in post-rigvedic period probably established as early as 1400 BCE. From present-day Kurukshetra to Mathura formed Kuru state. To east of **Kuru** state, there was **Panchal** state (near modern-day Kanouj in UP). It is said that both were branched out from a common origin. The territory covered by these two states has been mentioned in Mahabharata Epic & hence on mythological terms, it represents **Krishna-Pandavas- Kauravas Domain**.

Gopal is another name of **Krishna** which means a person who keeps/herds cows & herder job is generally done by an ordinary person. As a child, **Krishna** is not identified as the **Prince** like **Ram** but becomes darling of the masses by living, playing & moving with them. Hence **Krishna** represents a common man.

Painted Grey Wares & Iron tools have largely been unearthed in this region. This indicates that many migrated people first got settled in the region then got fully engaged in agricultural activities, cultivated rice, wheat, and barley, and domesticated cattle, sheep, goat, pigs, and horses. Also some were involved in making arts and crafts.

After some time, some people from southern part of Kuru State would have moved to present-day Gujarat & made their homes in Saurashtra (Dwaraka, Kathiawad) region. This is quite similar to legendary figure, **Krishna** shifting from Mathura to Dwaraka. Earlier, I-SVC people of Kutch & Saurashtra region had vacated their homes due to major climatic disaster that had occurred around 1900 to 1700 BCE & probably would have moved to southwards i.e. present-day Konkan, in Maharashtra where water availability was far better..

Aforementioned settlement pattern (which is based on mythological story of Vishnu) just gives an idea about the dominant roles played by various communities/tribes in different parts of

ancient India which has got direct bearing on local cultural developments also. Brahmins played major role in Himalaya & Gangetic plain settlement & also west-coast line of India, Warrior class dominated the north-east settlements & most of the commoners got settled in Kuru-Panchal region. But one must keep in mind that along with these major communities, other communities such as cultivators, herders, artisans, craftsmen, local tribes etc. were also present in every region. But historically speaking, timeline of these settlements could be different from mentioned in above paragraphs.

During ancient times, whenever the Brahmins from different parts of Indian Subcontinent met each other either accidentally or intentionally, **Sanskrit Language & Rigvedic Rituals** would have served common subjects/factors for their discussions. Also these two ancient features would have kept them connected with each other's despite living in the diverse local conditions/regional cultures. Sanskrit based Rigvedic Hymns are the main evidence that we have today, representing Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization.

Connecting Rigved with Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization:

A Hypothetical (or Fundamental) question that comes in my mind is,

If the Yajna ritual is intentionally removed or eliminated or subtracted (mathematical operation) from the Rigved, what would remain in it?

My answer is very simple, **Nothing** or **Zero** (mathematical term).

In my view, **Yajna** is the very soul of the **Rigved**. It is the Pivot around which whole life of the **Priests** used to revolve & the trend continued for several generations. It was a small scale replication of **Wild Fire**. Even today, wild fires do occur in various parts of the world resulting in the destruction of thousands of hectares/acres of forest, & cause uncountable numbers of deaths of birds/animals & also loss of human life but relatively small in number. After observing wild fires for several years, the Priests started a ritual of Yajna with sacrifices of living things. Just to invoke the Gods with complete devotion & dedication, they first started drinking **Soma juice**, and then, also offered the Soma juice in the form of oblation to their favourite Gods. As **Yajna** was based on **observation & experiment** methodology, in present context, it can be termed as a scientific activity. It was religiously performed to solve various problems that were faced by I-SVC society.

If there was no water problem, then there was no need to request the God **Indra** repeatedly to slay the Demon **Vritra** to get good rains or to kill the Demon **Vala** (brother of Vritra) to get water released from the caves into the seven rivers.

If there was no disturbances or creation of unholy situation due to the presence of **Dasas** (Hyenas) & **Dasyus** (Vultures) near the site of Yajna, then there was no need to pray to the God **Indra** frequently to destroy the **Puras** (Den/Burrows) of Dasas & the **forts** (Nests) of Dasyus & slay them.

If there was no disappearance of **Cows** of the **Priests**, then there was no need to appeal to the God **Indra** to locate their cows & free them from the custody of the **Panis**.

It appears to me that, the problems faced by the Priests & Society were real, but as explained in the Rigvedic Hymns, regular use of **Yajna** ceremony to solve the various problems by invoking the Gods is nothing but a poetic imagination.

Demon **Vritra** is described as a footless & handless dragon/serpent who lives in a place called Pura. He is also known as **Ahi** means **Snake**. As the snakes generally live in **burrows/holes/dens**, in one of the Rigvedic Hymns it is clearly indicated that the God **Indra** destroyed 99 Puras of Vritra & equating the incidence with the destruction of the living places of **Sambara Dasas**. **This is one more evidence of Dasas (Hyenas) live in burrows (similar to Snake; Vritra) & are not human-beings**. Vritra also defined as “the Enveloper” means He keeps Water of the world in his captive & it is believed that unless *He* is killed the society would not get water. This

statement is confusing because, How can Demon **Vritra**, a serpent hold water cloud or a river in his captive? But the Symbolism hidden in it, would be explained later.

Vala is another **demon** who is also defined as brother of **Vritra** in **Atharvaved** & it is also described in the Hymns that he also keeps/hides the **Cows** in his **Stone Caves**. It is also mentioned that **Indra** uses his weapon, **Vajra** to break/split the caves of **Vala** & frees the **Cows**, **Usha** & **Sun** from the custody of **Vala**. Symbolism hidden here is revealed in following paragraphs.

Before getting into the **Symbolism** hidden in the stories of **Vritra** & **Vala**, first we need to consider the fact that the Deities & Demons mentioned in various Rigvedic Hymns are the imaginary characters/Myths. Also, we should treat the hymns related to **Vritra** & **Vala** as the puzzles. From the background of the two stories, it is clear that there was **Severe Drought** like situation in the region where the **Rigvedic Priests** were living. As the nearby rivers had already gone dry, Water was not readily available in that area, and then daily the Priests would be going in search of sources of water in & around places of their residence. While searching for the water sources, they would have come across many burrows/dens of big snakes like Pythons near some water source. As they were afraid of the snakes living nearby water source, fetching water from the same would have been a great challenge for them. That is why in one of the hymns, it is depicted as “**Vritra yawned again and again, he seemed to be trying to swallow the whole sky with his mouth, which was as deep as a cave. He seemed to be licking up all the stars in the sky with his tongue and eating the entire universe with his long, sharp teeth. Seeing this gigantic demon, everyone, in great fear, ran here and there in all directions**”. A Hymn also describes **Vritra** as the “**Obstracter or encompasser of water**” This is an exaggeration of the actual thing experienced by the Priests. While performing **Yajna** after this incidence, they would have offered **Soma Juice** to God **Indra** specifically & requested Him to destroy the Demon **Vritra** so that they can fetch water fearlessly.

Vala is another demon who hides the “**Cows**” in his stone caves (probable meaning is a pond in mountain region). Here the real meaning of **Cows** would be “**Milky-white/bright & pure Streams of Water originating from the mountains after the rains OR in summer, water streams generated after the melting of Snow on Snow Laden Mountains or a Glacier**”. This event also tells us that some Rishis & their followers, would have gone to the mountains in search of water & from a long distance, they would have seen the milky white streams coming down from mountains. Here **Vala** is described as a “**Blocker**”. Other hymns explain that **Indra** Broke the **Limbs** of **Vala** one by one which indirectly tells us that **Vala** would be a **fearful wild animal**; “**Crocodile**” who used to live in a cave/pond, & from the top of the mountains, the small streams of water used to fall & get collected in His stone cave/ rock pond(location described, may be a waterfall). But due to presence of **Vala (Crocodile)**, the Priests were unable to use water from the pond or probably wanted to take bath in the pond or bring their cows for drinking water. Presence of **Usha** & the **Sun** in the hymns associated with **Vala** probably expresses the request made by the Priests to God **Indra** through **Yajna**, so that He would relieve them from the dangerous **Vala** (free from his terror) & bring **fresh Rays of Hope on the next day morning**. It is quite possibly, a particular **Yajna** would have been performed in the evening/night.

The most striking feature of **Indra-Vritra (a serpent-footless & handless)** & **Indra-Vala (a crocodile -has Limbs & hence can walk)** stories is that both **Snake & Crocodile** are landbased animals & are classified as the **Reptiles**. In **Atharvaved** both are defined as Brothers which is very close to the fact as they belong to **same zoological category(Reptile)**. Surprising! Is not it?

From 2600 to 1900 BCE, is generally considered as the mature Harappan period. It was during this period, overall development of distinct urban culture occurred in Indus Valley Civilization (IVC), various arts & crafts activities flourished & regular business & trade contacts with other cultures were established. It is well established truth that IVC was on decline from 1900

BCE due to the major climatic change & area was under Drought for a very long period & finally abandoned by the people around 1700 BCE, but in a phased manner. Stories of *Vritra & Vala* indirectly bring out the fact that there would also have been severe **Drought Like Situation** faced by the **Rigvedic Priests** who also lived in the **same area around same time**. **This can also be termed as 'ap-turya', or the struggle for waters**. Based on the **existing similarity** of the **water problem faced**, when Rigvedic period is superimposed over the IVC decline period, a clear picture emerges depicting Rigvedic composition as the part of **IVC** & hence I call it as **Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization (I-SVC)**.

In my view, around 2200 BCE, Yajna as a new ritual was first established on the bank of river **Saraswati**, & then slowly it got spread in various parts of I-SVC & subsequently became a regular practice by 2000 BCE. As Yajna was the brainchild of the Seers, they would have started considering themselves as the Only Knowledgeable Persons of the Society and this could have made them Headstrong, self-centred persons. Therefore, Rigvedic Hymns mainly focus on Yajna and related activities & do not talk much about the other issues including the developments in material culture. During Rainy seasons, due to rains, when open air Yajnas were not possible, the Priests from different locations used to assemble at some places on the bank of river **Saraswati**, to have discussion about Yajna procedure and also share the experiences gained during earlier year. There would have also been consultation/deliberation about newly composed Hymns & imparting necessary training to their followers & the newcomers.

Slowly, various Kings of I-SVC also got attached to Yajna ceremony, and got linked with the key Rishis' families and this would have led to the permanent association & then the formation of the lineages of different Seers & Kings (clan culture). Unfortunately, the Priests could not read the Nature's behaviour, i.e. the major climate change that began to occur from the period 2000 to 1900 BCE that was indirectly dictating to them to go for a change of place. Instead, they started conducting the Yajna ceremony more vigorously & would have told the Warriors/ Rulers that Yajna would definitely bring necessary change in the climate & the region would receive very good rainfall in future. But when Yajna ritual did not give satisfactory result for a long period, then the most of the people would have become restless & slowly started losing interest in Yajnas. Probably from the school of Rishi Angiras, suggestion came to go for Human Sacrifice (as it happens in Wild fire also) that clearly divided Priestly community into two groups leading to a section of the Priests forced to leave the I-SVC with their followers who later on created independent Avestan Culture (Avestan people considered **Angra Mainyu** as the major **Demon** which probably indicates their anger about the family of Sage Angiras but in Rigved **Manyu/Mainyu** is **God**). When situation got worse, the people who were living pastoral life, such as various herders (who regularly need both water & fodder for their animals. As rain forms integral part of the life without which the food chain cannot sustain & water is the most precious thing required for survival of everyone) would have started moving out I-SVC region to settle eastwards (Kuru Pradesh). But then also the stubborn Priests remained unmoved & possibly, around 1800 BCE, some warrior class people from the west of Indus River would have decided to leave I-SVC area (probably, **Ancestors of Mitanni** Warrior would have been the first to migrate towards the north-west) along with the **Traders** who were very well conversant with **Syrian** region because of their regular trading contacts. Also some craftsmen & artists who got frustrated with the developments in I-SVC area, & some warrior class people from the far east of Indus River would have decided to shift & settle in nearby Kuru Pradesh. When more & more people started deserting the towns, then only Priestly Community would have realized the seriousness of the water problem & finally decided to move to the east with the remaining warrior class people.

Summary: Earliest form of Rigved was composed during the Mature Harappa Period & Yajna was devised by the rigvedic priests. Importance of Yajna has not only been highlighted in Rigved but also in other three Vedas (Samved, Yajurved & Atharvaved). Indus- Saraswati Society was

including of Priests, Warrior Tribe(Anu, Puru, Yadu etc), Traders (Panis), Cultivators, Herders, Artisans etc.

When we focus our attention on Yajna ceremony, then we get better insight about the priestly community people & their attachment to Yajna ritual. When we take Yajna at the centre-stage of Indus-Saraswati Valley civilization, a totally new picture emerges, depicting use of Yajna for well being of the society including invitation to rains. Yajna-centric interconnection of Rigvedic community with Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization has been summarized as follows;

1. Yajna was a small scale duplication of a natural event i.e. Wild/ Forest fire. Yajnas were performed to invoke gods, invite rains, to achieve prosperity, peace & stability in life.
2. As Agni was the first natural force man brought under his control, it was treated as the important god. God Indra was an imaginary but Supreme God created with the intention to control all other natural forces & foes as well.
3. Initially, Mitra & Varuna (dual) were treated as Asuras, as peak summer heat wave & excessive rains used to disrupt Yajna ceremony for almost four to six months.
4. Dasas & Dasyus described in Rig Ved were Hyenas & Vultures respectively who wanted to eat the remains of animals which were killed for sacrifice purpose as both are the excellent scavengers but their presence used to create unholy conditions & problems for the Priests. Probably, the past experience of the Rigvedic Priests would have led to the formation of subsequent hardcore belief; **Touchables & Untouchables** in Hindu society in later period(during Gupt dynasty period).
5. Around 1900 BCE, when there was severe drought originated due to climate change causing a serious threat to all living things of Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilization, then the large scale Yajnas were organized to please God Indra & invite the rains. But excessive killings of animals & human-beings for Yajnas led to vertical split in rigvedic community. Those who strongly opposed human sacrifices, were boycotted & compelled to leave the area that then shifted to north side & developed an independent society there, called as Avestan Society.
6. Despite performing several Yajnas, when Indus-Saraswati region did not receive sufficient rainfall for a longer period causing severe shortages of water everywhere that also resulted in drying up of many rivers, by 1700 BCE, people of Indus-Saraswati area were forced to migrate to other places. Most of them first moved eastwards & finally got settled in present-day Gangetic plains.

Rigved is a poetic commentary on the lifestyle of ritual loving Priestly Community People of Indus-Saraswati Civilization Era; their attempt to control natural forces by performing Yajna; and their explanations to justify occurrences of natural & unexpected events using some imaginary characters & incidences.

Note:

I have expressed my views on the various features of **Rigved** that have been appealing to me since many years. In aforementioned text, early part of each topic generally explains “What Others Say” & later part covers “What I Feel” including my views on **Dasas, Dasyus, Panis, Vritra & Vala**.

But anyone would definitely get a question, Why did the Priests hide the facts from others & described these characters using **typical words** in the Hymns to create confusion? And the answer is, the Priests used to regularly boast to the society leaders that just by performing Yajnas & reciting Richas/Hymns, they can easily bring the natural forces under their control & also defeat the demons

of their imagination. But in reality, they were very much scared/afraid of (frightened) some real big birds & wild animals & hence intentionally termed them as **Dasas, Dasyus, Vritra & Vala etc.** They used secret code language (obscure) only known to their fellow colleagues so that it would remain **closely guarded community secret & a puzzle to others**. This can be called as **Riddles in Rigved**. **Yogi Aurobindo** has rightly said that actual meanings of many Sanskrit words used by the Rigvedic Priests were known to them & their close followers only.

I do understand that the readers of this article would not agree with me about the views on **Human sacrifice during Yajna Ritual**. Since I firmly believe that Yajna concept was derived from the **Wild Fire**, which causes destruction of many living things including human-beings, and this makes me to stick to my point. Buddha had criticized killing of animals during Yajna ceremony, which clearly shows that animal sacrifice was the regular practice during his time. I feel that use of Human Sacrifice was the last choice when other sacrificial things did not produce desired results. (It is generally believed that breaking of a **Coconut in front of Hindu Deities or after performing puja symbolises Human Sacrifice /Narabali**)

Some scholars love to do **beating around the bush** & some experts firmly believe in an age- old story of “**an elephant & seven blinds**”. That is why, instead of focusing on **Yajna & related things**, they take more interest in searching the Roots of the Common Words found in different Languages, Burial practices/Grave cultures, Horse & Chariot, identification of various tribes (Dasas, Dasyus, Panis etc) mentioned & their '**original locations**'; & Pottery plus other Material Cultures etc. In Any Way (येन केन प्रकारेण), or “**by hook or by crook** “ many try to link the Aryans tribe with the Europe & Central Asia & some of them regularly pretend that they have understood the Rigved & circumstances behind it fully, and, once for all, also, solved the problem of origin of the Aryans. Somehow, they also try to connect one thing with the other, similar to proverb, Badarayan sambanadhah(बादरायण संबंधः). just to fulfill their preconceived ideas. But I find the **title** of the book *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* written by **Sri Aurobindo** very apt. In my view, the word '**Arya**' means **Learned or Civilized Person** during that era. To me, **Rigved** is still a **Mystery**.